

CITY OF OAKLAND

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AGENDA REPORT

TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Daniel Lindheim
FROM: CAO/ADA Programs
DATE: March 24, 2009

SUBJECT: COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
ANNUAL REPORT FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2008

SUMMARY

In this report the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities informs the City Council of its accomplishments in 2008 and its goals and objectives in 2009.

FISCAL IMPACT

This report is informational and, as such, does not have any fiscal impact.

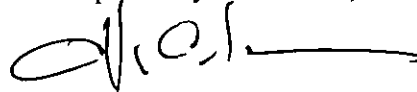
DISCUSSION

The Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD) was established by City ordinance in 1980 to represent and address the issues of people with disabilities. The MCPD is extremely active and effective, participating in nearly every aspect of City government and advocating for full inclusion of people with disabilities in the community. Since 1990, the MCPD has acted as the City's designated advisory body for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance. (The U.S. Department of Justice requires that cities establish a public advisory body to oversee implementation and monitoring of the ADA.)

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff requests that the City Council accept this informational report.

Respectfully Submitted,

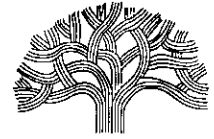


Christine Calabrese
City ADA Coordinator

FORWARDED TO THE
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE


Office of the City Administrator

CITY OF OAKLAND



MAYOR'S COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
1 FRANK H. OGAWA PLAZA · OAKLAND · CA · 94612

March 24, 2009

LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
Oakland City Council

**Subject: Commission on Persons with Disabilities Annual Report for
Calendar Year 2008**

Chairperson Brooks and Members of the Committee:

The Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD) hereby reports on its activities for calendar year 2008 and its goals and objectives for 2009.

I. Introduction

The Bay Area is the birthplace of the U.S. disability rights movement and a number of prominent disability advocacy organizations are located in Oakland, such as the Center for Independent Living, World Institute on Disability, and Lions Center for the Blind. In keeping with this legacy, the City of Oakland is a leader among Bay Area governments in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) implementation. Commission staff respond to numerous inquiries from other governmental agencies interested in emulating the commission and adopting City access compliance policies, practices and procedures.

The Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD) was established by City ordinance in 1980 to represent and address issues of people with disabilities. The MCPD has at least 51% representation by people with disabilities. Commissioners are living with a range of disabilities, such as blindness, deafness, visual impairment, hearing impairment, paralysis, other mobility impairment, HIV/AIDS, breast cancer, Cerebral Palsy, and Multiple Sclerosis. Representatives of the Oakland Public Library, Red Cross, United Cerebral Palsy, Oakland Housing Authority, Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program, and United Seniors of Oakland sat on the commission in 2008.

The MCPD is extremely active and effective, participating in nearly every aspect of City government and advocating for full inclusion of people with disabilities in the community. We thankfully receive great support from City officials, thereby avoiding the struggles of other local bodies whose influence in oversight of programs and policies is more limited.

The MCPD is the City's designated advisory body for ADA compliance. Because of the law's focus on accessibility to local government programs and facilities and its potential for costly litigation, effective implementation and broad community support are central to a successful ADA program. The MCPD works in close partnership with the ADA Programs Division in the Office of the City Administrator. This relationship spans over two decades and is key to the City's success in the disability rights and compliance arenas.

The Commission devotes many resources to advocating for full inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community. The MCPD works closely with community based organizations to provide mentorship, recognition and employment opportunities to persons with disabilities of all ages. By participation in celebrations of our City's rich heritage and in disability community events, the MCPD promotes a greater awareness of the issues, needs and cultural contributions of people with disabilities in Oakland. Each year, the MCPD conducts a series of events in commemoration of National Disability Awareness Month, most notably its annual Youth in Action event (see below).

There are fifteen (15) seats on the MCPD and at least eight (8) members must be present to constitute a quorum, according to the enabling ordinance. In 2008 the MCPD faced a serious decline in membership as well as a decline in meeting attendance due primarily to health issues. Three members announced their resignations in 2008 citing personal reasons and more resignations were anticipated for 2009.

Starting in May 2008, commissioners and staff carried out extensive recruitment outreach. As of September 2008, we had interviewed and forwarded six new applicants and one applicant for reappointment to the Mayor's Office. The Mayor forwarded three (3) appointments to the City Council on February 17, 2009. Four (4) additional appointments are slated for March 17, 2009. With those seven (7) appointments, the MCPD will list thirteen (13) members on its roster.

II. Calendar Year 2008 Activities

ADA COMPLIANCE OVERSIGHT

Transportation and Mobility. The Commission on Persons with Disabilities has moved its oversight of City transportation and mobility programs from committee to its monthly meeting agenda. The MCPD Transportation and Mobility Committee is suspended until membership increases and the Committee can provide broad participation by the disability community in the review and support of these programs.

The MCPD continued its monitoring of City public right of way improvement programs. The MCPD heard quarterly reports on curb ramp, sidewalk repair, and disabled parking zone programs. It reviewed the Citywide Sidewalk Survey report with Michael J. Neary, CEDA Deputy Director. The MCPD reviewed and approved the Draft ADA Curb Ramp Transition Plan dated October 13, 2008 which was then issued for public comment.

The MCPD took quarterly reports from the Oakland Paratransit for the Elderly and Disabled Program.

ADA Capital Programs. The MCPD provides oversight for the ADA Buildings and Facilities Transition Plan and ADA Accommodations capital improvement projects that are managed by the ADA Programs Division.

The ADA Buildings and Facilities Transition Plan project removes major architectural barriers identified by the City's federally mandated ADA Buildings and Facilities Transition Plan or by qualified complainants. Public entities must have a structured and scheduled program for transitioning buildings and facilities to ADA compliance. Over 100 City buildings and facilities remain on the ADA Transition Plan list. Fiscal year 2007-09 projects include accessibility improvements at various branch libraries and play areas, as well as the Edoff Memorial Bandstand renovation (case settlement).

The ADA Accommodations project provides reasonable accommodations and program modifications for employees and customers with disabilities. Improvements include adaptive technology, furnishings, wheelchair lifts, ramps, etc.

City Access Policy. The MCPD is providing technical assistance and oversight for the complete overhaul of the City Access Policy, Administrative Instruction #123. It approved the first draft revision in October 2008.

Publications. The MCPD reviewed new ADA Programs materials including a brochure, a resource guide, and a compliance guide for city contractors.

Emergency Preparedness. The nationwide increased security awareness and concern regarding catastrophic disaster preparedness, especially for special needs populations, has caused the disability community to make emergency preparedness a top priority.

Each year the Oakland Fire Department Office of Emergency Services provides an informational report to the Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD). The informational report for calendar year 2008 was presented by Renee Domingo, Office of Emergency Services Director, Oakland Fire Department, on May 12, 2008 to the full commission.

The MCPD also met with emergency preparedness and disability expert June Kailes in October 2008. Kailes is assisting the City to adopt policies, practices and procedures that identify and address the functional needs of people with disabilities and elders during emergencies.

Public Safety. At its June 9, 2008 meeting the MCPD heard a presentation by Michael Sullivan, Sergeant, ADA Coordinator for the San Francisco Police Department on the San Francisco Police Department's training and policies, practices and procedures for interfacing with persons with disabilities, especially persons with emotional, psychiatric

and developmental disabilities. Sergeant Sullivan provided a full copy of his department's ADA training manual to the MCPD.

YOUTH ADVOCACY

The MCPD continued building its Youth In Action program, partnering with the Oakland Unified School District, Office of Parks and Recreation Inclusive Recreation Program, Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program, Lions Center for the Blind, Family Resource Center, California School for the Deaf, Stepping Stones Growth Center, the Cerebral Palsy Center for the Bay Area, and the Center for Independent Living to increase recognition and opportunities for youth with disabilities, ages 14-21.

Last year saw the fourth annual Youth in Action, Celebrating Future Leaders of the Disability Community awards program. The goal of this event is to identify and introduce to the disability community individuals aged 14 to 21 whose achievements and potential beyond secondary school make them candidates for leadership. The program was held at the Lake Merritt Sailboat House.

OUTREACH AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The MCPD participated in the Alameda County Transition Faire, held on March 15, 2008. This is an information gathering event for students with developmental disabilities, ages 14–22, their families, teachers, case managers and other interested persons to find out more about the transition process and adult services / resources / providers located in Alameda County.

Chairperson Safi wa Nairobi co-produced “Art Slam,” an exhibit of works by artists with disabilities. Art Slam was held at the DeYoung Museum, in San Francisco, during March 2008.

On July 15, 2008, the MCPD sponsored a noontime performance by AXIS Dance Company at Frank Ogawa Plaza, in front of Oakland City Hall. This was the second AXIS performance sponsored by the MCPD and it was well received and attended.

Former commissioner Lynne Cutler and Commissioner Lorraine Rosenblatt represented the MCPD at the Older Americans Month fair in Frank Ogawa Plaza on May 16, 2008 and at the Healthy Living Festival which was held at Lake Merritt on June 27, 2008.

Lynne Cutler and Commissioner Lorraine Rosenblatt attended the ceremonial groundbreaking for the Ed Roberts Campus located in Berkeley at the Ashby BART Station on September 5, 2008.

For the fifth consecutive year, commissioners participated in the City's Art & Soul Festival, providing information to the public and promoting upcoming MCPD events.

Commissioner Chris Finn received an award from the National Spinal Cord Injury Foundation for his on-going efforts and work on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries.

Chairperson wa Nairobi documented all the components of the national election process which culminated in the presidential election. She attended the National Democratic and Republican Conventions, the presidential acceptance speech in Grant Park and the Inauguration; focusing on persons with disabilities involvement in the election process.

Commissioner Eva Aguillard sponsored and taught a weekly arts and ceramics workshop which is held at the East Oakland Senior Center. This workshop has completed and donated over 75 lap robes and other articles to the elderly and people with disabilities within the City of Oakland.

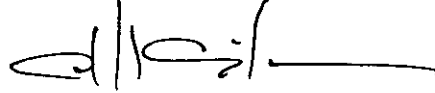
III. Calendar Year 2009 Goals and Objectives

1. Continue recruitment efforts with a focus on youth, ethnic diversity, language diversity, and broad representation of the disability community.
 - a. Increase appointed membership to the full compliment of fifteen members and /or change enabling ordinance as needed to ensure a quorum at monthly meetings.
 - b. Reinstate the Transportation and Mobility Committee (TMC) and expand TMC and Education, Employment, and Outreach Committee membership beyond appointed members of the Commission.
2. Continue oversight of City ADA Capital Improvement Programs and Public Right of Way Improvement Programs.
 - a. Oversee implementation of the City's Buildings and Facilities and Curb Ramp ADA Transition Plans.
 - b. Work with City leaders and staff to adopt an ADA Sidewalk Transition Plan (sidewalks, on-street disabled parking, and cross walks).
3. Continue mentoring and advocating for youth with disabilities, especially in the area of employment.
 - a. Expand Youth in Action program to include making connections between youth and employers.
 - b. Collaborate with the Mayor's Summer Jobs Program.
 - c. Apply for Oakland Fund for Children and Youth funding.
4. Provide educational and networking opportunities for the disability community and key internal and external agencies, especially in the areas of accessible affordable housing, emergency preparedness, and transportation and mobility.
 - a. Become a better resource for the disability community during these hard economic times.

5. Continue to advocate for full inclusion of people with disabilities in local and regional emergency preparedness activities.
 - a. Oversee implementation of the Disability Rights Advocates lawsuit settlement agreement.
6. Promote and celebrate disability art and culture; provide venues for the display of accomplished performing and visual artists, such as AXIS Dance Company.

Thank you for your continued support of the MCPD and of disability awareness and disability civil rights implementation in the City of Oakland.

Respectfully Submitted,



Christine Calabrese
City ADA Coordinator
Staff to the Commission